

of safety," says Margaret Cherny, vice president of regulatory affairs and communications for the company.

According to the EPA, when lab animals are exposed to the herbicide it causes fetal deformities and death. In preliminary industry studies reviewed by the EPA, the herbicide also poses over twice as great a risk of liver cancer in humans than allowed by EPA standards. Cherny says Rhone-Poulenc measured bromoxynil residue in the gin trash and concluded "there's not a problem there." The company has also offered to set up a program that would prevent trash from bromoxynil-resistant cotton from being fed to animals.

According to weed scientists, bromoxynil-resistant cotton offers an important weapon against such plant pests as cocklebur and morning glory. Daniel Reynolds, an associate professor of weed science at Mississippi State University, says using bromoxynil is better than alternatives, because it is used only on weeds that have sprouted. Without bromoxynil, he says, cotton farmers will have to put blanket, prophylactic applications of pesticides on soil before planting. "We'll see more reliance on those herbicides that have longer persistence in the soil," he says. "We have the potential for more surface water contamination [because of runoff]." But Goldman argues that bromoxynil may pose a greater risk to human health than alternative herbicides.

The issue of bromoxynil's use on cotton is not completely decided. The EPA is reviewing new data on bromoxynil's toxicity submitted by Rhone-Poulenc. "The decision that was made in 1997 was made under an incredible amount of time pressure," says Goldman. "We have had considerably more time since then to look at the data [demonstrating the health concerns about bromoxynil]." The EPA has told Rhone-Poulenc that the initial judgment of bromoxynil's cancer potential may have been too conservative. In a December letter to the company, Goldman wrote that the initial conclusion "may overestimate cancer risk. We expect further refinements may reduce the cancer risk estimate."

The December ban was the first time EPA scientists have implemented the additional safety factor guidelines required by the Food Protection and Quality Act. The EPA is asking the independent Scientific Advisory Panel for the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to examine the scientific basis for the agency's decision on bromoxynil. Bromoxynil is also used on a variety of crops including wheat, corn, and peaches, and the EPA intends to examine bromoxynil's use on those crops as well.



## A Well-planned Site

As the general population grows, so grows the demand for living space. City planners, government officials, and private citizens are scrambling to find sustainable ways to support increasing numbers of residents. Planners Web, an Internet site located at [www.plannersweb.com](http://www.plannersweb.com), provides guidance and useful tools for what it calls "citizen planners," such as members of local planning commissions and zoning boards.

The site offers many free resource pages, including the Sprawl Resource Guide, which is accessible from the home page. The guide lists hyperlinks to several major issues associated with urban sprawl. The link to Sprawl in the News provides newspaper articles from around the United States that discuss sprawl. For example, an article from the Raleigh, North Carolina, *News & Observer* includes an animated map illustrating sprawl over the last few decades. The Causes & Impacts of Sprawl link contains articles from various publications that address topics such as the origins and consequences of urban sprawl as well as sprawl-related myths that block reform, such as misconceptions about property rights and loss of local control.



The Problems Associated with Sprawl link provides examples of sprawl-associated problems such as land consumption, costs to local government, increased auto dependence and fuel consumption, inner city/racial impacts, and a feeling of loss of a "sense of place." Information found in the land consumption section includes links to the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Urban Retrospectives Research Program Web site, which provides graphics that show how urbanization occurs over time, and Earthshots, another USGS Web site, which provides satellite images of environmental change.

In addition to presenting the problems of urban sprawl, the Sprawl Resource Guide also attempts to provide the latest information and research on solutions. A link to Strategies for Dealing with Sprawl provides an extensive list of published articles highlighting research on sprawl and examples of various regional efforts to address the problem. Four groups of strategies are highlighted—creating a sense of place or community, preserving open space and farmland, concentrating growth and investment, and transportation priorities. A link to What's Happening Across the U.S. details efforts in various states.

From the Planners Web home page, users can access "top ten" lists on subjects of interest to planners such as recycling, air pollution, use of public transportation and carpooling, threatened land resource areas, and growth potential in metropolitan counties.

From a legal perspective, the "Takings" Resource Guide, accessible from the home page, provides information on government acquisition of private land and the property rights movement, and offers legal background, news, articles analyzing property rights issues, and position statements on the topic by various organizations.

The Impacts of Information Technology Resource Guide, available through the link to Shaping Our Communities: The Impacts of Information Technology, provides background on information technology and a unique look at how telecommunications and information technology will potentially impact communities. For example, the link to Business Location & Its Impacts provides a hyperlink to an article on telecommuting and auto use, which contains estimated statistics on the reduction of fuel use and auto emissions resulting from telecommuting. A link under Insights on Where We're Headed examines potential land use impacts of telecommunications.

The site also provides a quarterly publication, the *Planning Commissioners Journal*, which is available for a charge. Past journal articles are available on-line free of charge, and a keyword search of these articles is available.